

Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D. C. 20505



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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

9 July 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR: [redacted]

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DB8B1, DIA

FROM: [redacted]

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Chief, Near East Branch
Geography Division, OGI

SUBJECT: Lebanese Ports

1. In response to your request, attached is a memorandum identifying and describing all the legal and illegal ports serving Lebanon. [redacted]

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2. The research and analysis for the study was done by [redacted] of the Near East Branch, Geography Division, Office of Global Issues. [redacted]

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3. If you have any questions concerning this memorandum, please call me [redacted]

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Attachment:

Lebanon: Legal and Illegal Ports [redacted]

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GI M 85-10185, June 1985 [redacted]

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SUBJECT: Lebanese Ports

DDI/OGI/GD/NE/[redacted] (8 July 1985)

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Distribution:

Original - [redacted] DB8B1, DIA
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MEMORANDUM

Lebanon: Legal and Illegal Ports, June 1985

We regard legal facilities to be those franchised by and under the authority of the central government for the conduct of maritime trade and the movement of passengers and vehicles. Before the civil war five facilities were enfranchised to operate as general ports -- Tripoli, Juniyah, Beirut, Sidon, and Tyre -- and at least three were permitted to serve as specialized commodity ports -- Shikka (cement products), Ra's Sil'ata (grain and sulphates), and Az Zahrani (POL). When they are under government control, these eight ports are the only legal facilities in Lebanon. Currently, however, only Beirut port can be considered to be under some semblance of control of the central government; all other facilities, by our definition, are operating illegally. [REDACTED]

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Impact of the Illegal Ports

Illegal port activities affect the economy in several ways. Import duties and general customs fees go uncollected. Once one merchant imports illegally others feel they must follow suit to compete in the market place. Some Lebanese industries, once protected by tariff barriers, are unable to compete against low-cost illegal imports; furniture, textiles, leather goods, and bottlers have been hard hit. There is a snowball effect -- jobs are lost, tax revenue declines and customs revenue is lost when transshipment deals are made without government knowledge. [REDACTED]

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Many ports are used by the various militia to raise money through fees collected and to facilitate the flow of war materiel which perpetuates the crippling lack of security in Lebanon. National stability can be achieved only after one central authority begins to exercise control over the Lebanese coast. [REDACTED]

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July 1985

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Syria is affected by the illegal ports in Lebanon. The road and rail network in Syria was built with Beirut in mind. Since the advent of the Lebanese civil war Beirut has declined as an entrepot for Damascus. Syria's own ports have not been fully able to meet the increased burden of importing and distributing goods formerly imported through Lebanon. According to a US Embassy officer in Damascus, as much as one-third of Syria's imports are imported illegally. Much of this contraband arrives in Syria through the porous Lebanese coast and the common border they share. [REDACTED]

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Geography of the Lebanese Coast

The Lebanese coast line, stretching north-south 140 miles (221km) from Syria to Israel is bordered by a coastal plain which rises gently eastward to the Lebanese Mountains. The major urban centers -- Tripoli, Beirut, Sidon, and Tyre -- are located on the plain as is much of the Lebanon's best agricultural land. The coastal terrain in the north between the Syrian border and Tripoli is characterized by narrow beaches and scarps. Between Tripoli and Juniyah the coast line is comprised of rocky shores, scarps, cliffs, and only a few sandy beaches. From Juniyah to the Israeli border the coastal terrain is mainly sandy beaches with only a few rocky areas and scarps, the most prominent of which forms the cliffs in western Beirut. There are few natural harbors on Lebanon's coast because of the gentle nearshore slope, but the numerous promontories provide some protection from the prevailing westerly winds. [REDACTED]

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Ports, Anchorages, and Boat Basins of Lebanon

The locations of the following facilities are shown by number on the attached map. The descriptions of Tripoli, Beirut, Sidon, and Tyre are brief because they are extensively reported on elsewhere. Following the coordinates for each location is a letter symbol indicating the likelihood that the facility has been used in illegal trade. These symbols indicate from greater to lesser the degree of certainty with which we feel the facility is a K(known), P(probable) or L(likely) illegal facility; if there is U(uncertainty) surrounding the identity of the owners or operators or their intent then the facility is so marked. [REDACTED]

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At a minimum each place carrying the symbol 'U' has the physical attributes required for use as a smuggling facility. Not all such places in Lebanon are listed; only those facilities found in areas where the geography lends itself to smuggling are included. Unconfirmed reports or our analytical suspicion that a facility

has been used for smuggling upgrades the symbol to 'L'. Multiple reports about a place as a smuggling port is the criterion required to label it 'P'. Places [redacted] used for illegal purposes carry the 'K' symbol. [redacted]

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Four terms used in the following list need to be defined. A pier is considered to be a structure built into the water along or near to which a boat or ship can moor. A quay is that portion of a pier, often solid masonry, along which a ship can tie up. Many illegal ports in Lebanon use derelict ships, or hulks, to form quays or parts of piers. A sheltered area is an area protected by natural or manmade means from the direct effect of weather and sea. Basins are enclosed sheltered areas with limited access to the sea. [redacted]

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1. Nahr al Barid 34 31N 35 38E -L-

A rubble pier north of the Nahr al Barid Palestinian refugee camp provides shelter for small boats. Built between February and June 1985, its affiliation is unknown but it probably serves Palestinian interests. [redacted]

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2. Al Abdah 34 31N 35 58E -L-

This small boat shelter is formed by an east-west trending rock outcrop just south of Al Abdah. The operators and their political-religious affiliations are unknown. [redacted]

25X1

3. Al Minyah 34 29N 35 56E -K-

This facility consists of four rubble piers, two of which have been built using large hulks as part of their construction. Two hulks formed both breakwater and quay, but by June 1985 both hulks had broken up and offloading activity is now accomplished using lighters. Reportedly, commercial enterprises conducted by merchants are carried out through this facility. [redacted]

25X1

4. Burj an Nahr 34 27N 35 50E -L-

Two rubble piers, one with a hulk used in its construction, form this sheltered area just north of the mouth of the Abu Ali river near Tripoli. No confirmation of affiliation or usage exists. [redacted]

25X1

5. Tripoli 34 26N 35 51E -K-

Extensive port descriptions of Tripoli already exist. In June 1985 the Islamic Unification Movement claimed through a Voice of Lebanon broadcast that they were in complete control of the port. We have no reason to discount this claim and regard all activity there to be illegal. [redacted]

25X1

6. Al Mina' 34 27N 35 49E -K-

This facility is an extension of the Al Mina' peninsula. It is constructed with rubble and two hulks that lie side by side to form a makeshift quay. The outward most hulk broke up and sank over the winter thus obstructing seaward access to the remaining portion. Inactive since the breakup, affiliation of the facility is unknown but we believe it is controlled by the Islamic Unification Movement. [REDACTED]

25X1

7. Tallat Mishal 34 25N 35 49E -U-

Hulk and rubble construction is employed here. Neither verifiable usage nor affiliation are known. [REDACTED]

25X1

8. Abu Halqah 34 25N 35 49E -U-

This small boat basin is affiliated with a resort of unknown name. No verified illegal usage. [REDACTED]

25X1

9. Dayr Mar ya Qub 34 24N 35 48E -U-

This small boat basin is affiliated with a resort complex of unknown name. No verified illegal usage. [REDACTED]

25X1

10. Al Qalamun 34 24N 35 48E -U-

This basin is of unknown affiliation and we have no verification of its use as an illegal facility. [REDACTED]

25X1

11. Shikka 34 20N 35 44E -K-

This is ostensibly a legal facility for loading cement and discharging sulphate, although other goods are smuggled through here. The facility is affiliated with the Christian Marada militia. A small basin is a short distance to the south near Shikka's town center. [REDACTED]

25X1

12. Al Hiri 34 20N 35 43E -L-

This facility south of Shikka town center is part of a legitimate cement/sulphate operation. No verified illegal activity can be noted, but the facility is associated with the Christian Marada militia through its owner, Sulayman Franjiyah. [REDACTED]

25X1

13. Jabal an Nariyah 34 19N 35 42E -U-

This facility is near the south end of the Shikka bight. It employs a hulk in its rubble construction, and we have no record of the facility's affiliation or usage. [REDACTED]

25X1

14. Dayr an Nariyah 34 19N 35 42E -U-

This rubble-formed boat basin is just south of Jabal an Nariyah. Its affiliation and usage are unknown. [REDACTED]

25X1

15. Ra's Sil'ata 34 17N 35 40E -K-

This substantial facility is legally allowed to handle grains, sulphates, and sulphuric acid. At least one large fixed-position crane is used here. Associated with the Christian Marada militia, the operators' petition to gain full legal status for the port was denied in the summer of 1984. [REDACTED]

25X1

16. Batrun 34 15N 35 40E -L-

The small boat basin near this town has no verifiable history of illegal use. This facility is in the Christian heartland. [REDACTED]

25X1

17. Kafr 'Ubayda 34 14N 35 40E -P-

Press reports of illegal activity here have not been not verified by imagery. This small rocky point has been altered by building a quay-like structure using concrete-like material along the north side; access to roads from the quay is difficult. [REDACTED]

25X1

18. Jubayl 34 07N 35 39E -L-

Well within the Christian heartland, Jubayl has a natural boat basin with a rubble breakwater on the southside. No verifiable illegal usage. [REDACTED]

25X1

19. Al Fidar 34 06N 35 39E -L-

A small, rubble finger pier is in Al Fidar just east of the southern extension of the highway airport. No confirmed reports of illegal activity exist for this facility. [REDACTED]

25X1

20. Aqua Marina 34 01N 35 39E -P-

Yacht basins are associated with unidentified resorts near Al Ma'amiltayn on Juniyah Bay. The precise location of Aqua Marina is unknown. Originally used for militia purposes, Aqua Marina reportedly has grown into a commercial facility. [REDACTED]

25X1

21. Juniyah 33 59N 35 38E -K-

Juniyah is one of Lebanon's five legal ports. It consists of three basins: one for pleasure craft, one for naval boats and one apparently for passenger/vehicular ferry traffic. Also reported as Ad Dawrah. Beirut Embassy

reports that 75 percent of revenue at Juniyah goes to the Phalange with the remainder going to the G-2 of the Christian Lebanese Forces (LF). [REDACTED]

25X1

22. Mina al Hadid 33 59N 35 36E -U-

This small sheltered basin is associated with the thermal power plant in East Beirut. The basin is clogged now by two sunken hulks. There are no reports of illegal use of this facility. [REDACTED]

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23. Wata Nahr al Kalb 33 58N 35 35E -U-

This beach and basin area is associated with an unidentified resort complex. No illegal use of this facility is known. [REDACTED]

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24. Nahr al Kalb 33 57N 35 36E -U-

This basin is associated with an unidentified resort complex. No illegal use of this facility is known. [REDACTED]

25X1

25. Dbayeh 33 56N 33 35E -K-

This illegal facility has two large quays capable of servicing large containerized cargo vessels. It is known to use four portable cranes; no known fixed crane capacity has ever been noted here. During its busiest days before before its closing by the central government in November 1984 many hundreds of containers were in its marshalling yard. Construction on the southern extension of the container handling area has proceeded steadily since January 1985. During June 1985 work started on what appears to be a pier within the sheltered area. This pier describes a small boat basin and may become useful for ferry service. Revenue goes to the Phalange and the LF. [REDACTED]

25X1

26. Antilyas 33 55N 35 35E -U-

This basin is associated with an unidentified resort complex. No illegal use of this facility is known. [REDACTED]

25X1

27. Nahr al Mawt-33 54N 35 34E -U-

This nest of three piers radiates from a center point just offshore from an industrialized area of East Beirut. No illegal use of this facility is known. [REDACTED]

25X1

28. Mar Yusuf 33 54N 35 33E -U-

This is a small boat shelter north of the mouth of the Nahr Bayrut. No illegal use of this facility is known. [REDACTED]

25X1

29. Fifth Basin 33 54N 35 32E -K-

At times this facility is reported as the fourth basin. Illegal activity goes on along and north of the 14th quay.

[redacted]

It was closed and handed over to the government in November 1984, but reopened before mid-May this year. Although clogged with lighters, floating cranes and at least one partially submerged ship, the small basin just west of the mouth of the Nahr Bayrut also is the focus of illegal activity. We consider the 14th quay and the small basin to its east to be the Fifth Basin. Revenue goes to the LF. [redacted]

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30. Beirut Port 33 53N 35 30E --*

Extensive data on this port are available elsewhere.

The first basin remains littered with sunken vessels. [redacted]

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*The legal status of this port is only as good as the integrity of customs fees collection. While there is neither reporting nor any other direct evidence to suggest that fees are siphoned to other than the state treasury, we view with suspicion all activity within the legally defined port boundary. [redacted]

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31. An Nabi al Awaz'i 33 51N 35 29E -K-

Construction on this facility stopped shortly after starting in the late fall of 1984. Work started again in March of this year and is still ongoing. Not yet operational, the facility will have a large cargo handling area. It is being built around a preexisting small boat basin near the Shi'a neighborhood for which it is named. This facility is under the authority of Amal. [redacted]

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32. Khaldah 33 47N 35 28E -K-

Under construction since September 1984, this port was reportedly first used in early May 1985 while construction was still underway. The first confirmed activity here was [redacted]

The facility consists of a rubble pier with a small, apparently concrete, section to serve as a quay. A fixed position crane is currently in place. At its busiest Khaldah has had two ships abreast tied up to it with two other ships waiting offshore. This facility belongs to the Druze PSP. [redacted]

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33. Al Jiyah 33 39N 35 24E -K-

This small rubble pier is on the northern side of the power plant in Al Jiyah. It was formerly used as a Christian facility for passenger and materiel movement, both military and civilian. Since late April it has been under the control of the PSP. The use, if any, to which the PSP has put the facility is unknown. [redacted]

25X1

34. Sidon 33 33N 35 22E -K-

Extensive data on this port are available elsewhere. The port is small and most frequently services calling vessels by lighterage. Power struggles in this largely Sunni city are played out beyond the control of the central government. We regard all maritime trading conducted through Sidon to be illegal. [REDACTED]

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35. Az Zahrani 33 30N 35 20E -U-

This small basin is near the Zahrani refinery and likely services the roadstead pilot. The refinery itself is served from the roadstead. No confirmation is available of any recent usage of the boat basin. [REDACTED]

25X1

36. Tyre 33 16N 35 11E -K-

Extensive data on this port already exists. As in Sidon, most vessels calling here are served by lighters. Tyre, also, is not under control of the central government. We regard all maritime trade through Tyre to be illegal. [REDACTED]

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37. An Naqurah 33 07N 35 08E -K-

In this small town near the Israeli border a rubble pier has been built into a preexisting boat basin. Press report have portrayed the facility as a port that was upgraded by the Israeli-backed Army of South Lebanon to generate revenue for them and to facilitate communication between the southern Christians and their coreligionists east and north of Beirut. Access via hard surfaced roads proceeds through areas controlled by the United Nations. Recent unconfirmed Israeli press reports have announced an Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) agreement to an Amal request for routine use of An Naqurah. [REDACTED]

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